2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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themselves are the women's work-groups, small cliques of village wives who work together in the fields and elsewhere, exchanging gossip and favours in the process. These female networks link up with the male ones through the wives of influential men (cf. Plate 10).

The sequence of contacts that have to be made if someone in the village is to influence or be influenced by people in the above list constitutes an intra-village network.

Inter-Village Networks

Two kinds of network fall under this heading, one linking agnates, the second affines. The first are ritual and juridical networks, linking up with distantly related men in other villages of the commune. This commune was first settled, it is claimed, by a man who founded the maximal lineage to which nearly all of the inhabitants belong. Hulla:ḍa people mostly belong to one of the three major lineages, this one established by Koṅga Hetappa, one of the commune founder's three sons. Within Hulla:ḍa and a nearby village (Ke:ti) the lineage is further divided into four minimal lineages, each descended from one of Koṅga Etappa's four sons. The more important festivals are celebrated in common by all sixteen villages in the commune, using ritual personnel from any of these villages. Serious problems are discussed by all the village headmen at the commune council. Hulla:ḍa villagers can establish contact with the wealthiest and most influential men in the commune by activating these two networks, either through a village headman or through a friend who has helped in the rituals.

Secondly, the marriage and visiting networks link Hulla:ḍa with villages beyond this commune. Marriages account for a network of social contacts with nearly two dozen other villages, and these are frequently activated by informal visits and by attendance at the festivals, weddings and funerals of affines. Small loans may be sought along these networks (Hockings, in press).

Inter-Tribal Networks

The Badagas of Hulla:ḍa were linked for certain economic and ritual purposes with particular Kotas, Todas, Kurumbas and Chettis. For the most part these associations have fallen into

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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178 abeyance, but until about 1930 they did follow the pattern detailed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Village-and-Town Networks

631 These more modern networks may roughly be classed as either formal or informal. Formal ties are those that use the recognized channels of local government. Information about personal or legal problems may sometimes be obtained from the *panchayat* office in the next village. A clerk in that office, which is an organ of the state government, will either supply information himself or direct the enquirer to a government office in town (where he will possibly be sent to yet other offices!).

• 571 The informal ties between town and village make use of Badaga friends and relatives who work, study or live in the towns, or connect with non-Badagas living in the towns who know where to get information or how to solve a problem. Informal networks are often used by villagers when the formal ones do not resolve a difficulty: this is probably true of many communication systems (Frank, 1958–1959, *passim*).

THE POSITION OF BADAGAS IN NILGIRI SOCIETY

178 The customary interdependence between the Badagas and other groups is so complex and yet so loose that it has changed to varying extents in different parts of the plateau during this century. Some Badagas are much more dependent than others on the cash economy and usually try to avoid the burden of old obligations. The potentialities of a labour market, nearness of bus routes to town, aboriginal residence patterns and the relative proximity of tribal settlements have all been important in determining the extent to which the Badagas of each village have dropped their traditional ties with the indigenous tribes.

178 184 Thus, to cite one example, Badagas of the Kundena:du region tend to be more conservative in outlook than other Badagas: they still invite a Kota band to play at their ceremonies and in other ways keep up their ties with the nearby Kota village. Elsewhere in the Nilgiris the great majority of Badagas eschew contact with Kotas as they now consider it demeaning. A modern Badaga who

554 any wealthy man should be believed before some ordinary man, a Badaga should
695 be believed before a non-Badaga (other factors being relatively equal), a small
(562) boy should be believed before an adult, but an old man should be believed before
(565) a younger one. Until about 1940 utterances from ghosts or gods (spoken through
(609) possessed mediums) were treated as reliable evidence, more reliable indeed than
561) anything men might say.

593 Badagas are familiar with the phenomenon of in-group solidarity, as it regularly finds graphic illustration in the hearing of village disputes. A man is so dependent upon the support of his family in a dispute, as well as in his daily ritual observances, that it is normally assumed -- unless he is disputing with his (425) own brother -- that he will not lie to his family about anything. So if Kadan, for example, is engaged in a dispute with Rangan over the shifting of a field boundary, Kadan can expect his family's support in the matter even though they all know that his evidence is a complete fabrication; indeed the whole family stands to gain if 613 Kadan wins the case, provided the family estate remains undivided until then. If Rangan is from another lineage than Kadan (and the dispute is sufficiently important, we might add), each man may win the active support of his entire lineage.
•571 Similarly in a dispute between two men of different hamlets, each man's hamlet
621 will typically support him in the dispute even though his claim is known to be false. At the level of inter-village disputes the support from an entire hamlet may be forthcoming only because everybody feels the reputation of his own hamlet is at 578 stake; few would look for material gains in the situation. The fixing of village (657) boundaries by the Revenue Board during the 1880's obviated the possibility of an inter-village dispute over field boundaries; but important conflicts can still arise over marriage and divorce, inheritance, debt and interest, theft, and a variety of